

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE MEXICAN FRUIT FLY QUARANTINE

Q. What fruits are hosts of Mexican Fruit Flies?

- A. More than 40 different agricultural commodities have been identified as hosts for the Mexican Fruit Fly, especially the soft skinned fruit and citrus.

Q. I live inside the quarantine zone. I only have a few fruit trees and do not plan to sell my fruit. Can I give away any fruit to my family, friends, neighbors or charity?

- A. Any host fruit may contain fruit fly eggs that you can't see on the surface. Carrying that fruit to other areas will contribute to the spread of the pest. For that reason you **may not** give away your fresh homegrown fruit anywhere or to anyone you choose. You don't want to give others fruit to eat that may be filled with worms (larvae). You can process (i.e., juice, jam, guacamole, etc), your fruit.

Q. Can I eat my own fruit?

- A. Yes, you can eat your own fruit while on your property. It is a good idea to bake or freeze that fruit to avoid accidentally carrying it off your property.

Q. I have host fruit that I want to sell. What do I need to do?

- A. Contact Valley Center Mexican Fruit Fly Project regulatory staff for details on what steps you must take and the type of permit you need in order to sell your harvested fruit. If you have bearing host trees, you can enter a program to treat them, according to guidelines established by the project regulatory staff.

Q. Can I treat my fruit after I pick it?

- A. To ensure there is no threat of spreading the pest, host fruit must be processed before it can be moved from your property. However some fruits may be treated under the supervision and specific direction of regulatory personnel. Contact the project regulatory staff for details.

Q. I have some fruit that will not be ripe until spring. Do I still need to treat those trees?

- A. It may be necessary to begin treatment now for a spring harvest date. To learn more contact the project regulatory staff.

Q. What if I choose not to treat?

- A. If you live in a quarantine zone and you choose not to treat, you may not remove fresh fruit from your property without permission from the project regulatory staff and then only according to regulatory guidelines.

Q. What should I do with the fruit on my trees if I choose not to treat?

- A. Untreated fruit that is harvested can only be removed from your property after it is commercially treated under supervision of project regulatory staff, or if it has been processed (canned, juiced, baked, frozen, etc.).

Q. If I choose to treat, who will advise me?

- A. The project regulatory staff or the eradication project staff in your area can advise you on many aspects of treatment including what materials to use, best time of day to treat, the proper application methods and the frequency of applications.

Q. Who will pay for the treatments?

- A. All treatments are at the expense of the owner of the fruit and may only be conducted with supervision from the project regulatory staff or eradication project staff.

Q. Do I need to sign a compliance agreement? If so, then why do I need a hold notice since most of the items listed on the hold notice are also mentioned on the compliance agreement?

- A. Only properties within 200 meters of a fly find are issued a hold notice during the quarantine. Fruit under such a hold notice cannot be moved without written permission from the County Agricultural Commissioners. Compliance agreements are used to **outline elements** of a required treatment program so growers know what is expected of them.

Q. What about my neighbors? They have fruit trees but apparently have not yet signed any compliance agreements.

- A. Participation in this treatment program is mandatory during a declared quarantine. If your neighbors are planning to harvest their fruit, they must contact project regulatory staff before harvesting their fruit.

Q. What do I do before I begin treating my fruit?

- A. 1 – Obtain a Pesticide Use Permit from your County Agricultural Commissioner.

2 – Apply for a site ID Number and a Grower ID number from your County Agricultural Commissioner (required in order to purchase treatment material).

These numbers must be immediately accessible and available when treatments are conducted.

3 – Obtain a SLN (Special Local Need) Permit for the purchase and use of **Malathion** *or* a Section 18 Permit for purchase and use of **Spinosad**. Apply at your County Agricultural Commissioner's office.

4 – Contact the project regulatory staff to coordinate treatments. (The contact number will be provided you by the County Agricultural Commissioner)

5 – You and eradication project staff will sign a Treatment Agreement. You will be asked for specific treatment information (i.e., how many acres/trees you are treating, if you will be using a grove service, etc).

6 – Select a date to begin treatment and notify project staff of that date. Project staff will keep records of all your treatments and issue a certificate of completion when the prescribed number of treatments haven been applied.

Q. What material do I use to treat?

A. There are two options: *Malathion*, mixed with liquid bait and water and sprayed directly on the leaves of your trees, or *Spinosad*, also sprayed directly on leaves.

Q. How often should I treat?

A. One treatment every 7 – 14 days. If it rains more than ½ inch you will have to reapply any treatment made within the previous 24 –hours. Contact project regulatory staff for details.

Q. How long does the treatment period last?

A. This depends on climatic conditions. The range can be between 30 days and 127 days. The project staff will keep you appraised on the length of the treatment period.

Q. My fruit is ready to pick right now. I have to pick it soon; otherwise I could lose the whole crop. What should I do?

A. Harvest your crop as you normally would; but choose a post-harvest treatment or processing option before moving it from your property. For more information contact the project regulatory staff.

Q. Is there quarantine fumigation available at this time?

A. There are standard fumigation options for treatment for some host fruits. Contact the project regulatory staff for details.

Q. How do I know if my orchard is in the vicinity of a Mexican Fruit Fly find?

A. Contact the project regulatory staff.

Q. I have fruit trees in pots. Can I sell them or do I need to get a permit first?

A. During the quarantine you can not sell fruit fly host trees, regardless of where they are located on your property without treating the fruit and the soil, or stripping the fruit and treating the soil. You will need to obtain a permit to sell them. Contact the project regulatory staff for details.

Q. What kind of treatment do I need to treat the soil in pots?

A. Three successive soil treatments for nursery stock can be used during the quarantine to allow the material to move. Contact the project regulatory staff for details.

Q. I am a home-owner with only a few trees. How can I dispose of fallen fruit?

A. You may **double-bag** fallen fruit and place in your garbage can as usual to be taken to the landfill.